THE New Republic

The Formosans Do Know What They Want

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Behind the New Soviet Threat to Berlin

Whose Interest Interests the FCC?

By WILLIAM COSTELLO

Poems by Boris Pasternak and Richmond Lattimore

B. H. Haggin on Hi- or Hi-er Fi

Stanley Kauffmann on "He Who Must Die"

NOVEMBER 24, 1958

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Washington Wire

The Secret Is Out

HOW THE ATMOSPHERE has changed! Three books by top-flight Washington columnists have appeared in rapid succession, all critical of Eisenhower: *Eisenhower: Captive Hero* by Marquis Childs; *USA: Second Class Power?* by Drew Pearson and Jack Anderson, and now *The Reporter's Trade* by the Alsops. Even in 1957 few publishers would have brought out these books, yet for four years most working reporters here have known that the Administration is weak, vacillating and headless. In one of its touches of disarming candor *Time* confessed last week, "An overwhelming majority of the key reporters and pundits who write the day-to-day stories for US newspapers, radio and television are down-the-line liberal Democrats."

Not "Democrats," *Time*; they have just known the score about the Administration which magazines like *Time* have bottled up. They were bursting to tell it but mostly couldn't. Now the secret is out. Many former backers of Eisenhower justify their present criticism by saying "He's changed." Nonsense. He hasn't changed—they have. The times have.

The Alsop column is one of the best published. We do note in their new book, however, a certain tendency to appropriate anything that isn't nailed down; even to their comment (p. 190) that "from the moment when he (Eisenhower) chose a Cabinet of 'seventeen millionaires and a plumber' we began to be apprehensive." Now really, Joe and Stew, the phrase was "eight millionaires and a plumber" and it first appeared in this column, Dec. 15, 1952. Tut, tut!

Tasks for the Liberals

FOR TWO SHORT YEARS in the next Congress liberals will actually have a majority. It hasn't happened for a generation. What will they do with it? We suggest three things as a starter. Refuse Democratic credentials and committee posts to segregationist Dale Alford who defeated Rep. Brooks Hays (D, Ark.) as a write-in "independent." Second: Curb the reactionary House Rules Committee by restoring the "21-day rule" of 1949-50. The Rules Committee is the fortress of GOP-Southern coalition power. It controls the machine that turns on, or turns off, legislation. It can now hold back liberal legislation almost indefinitely. The old 21-day rule (thrown out in 1951) provided that any bill previously approved by a standing committee could be called up in 21 days without Rules Committee consent.

Finally: the Senate filibuster. Like the 21-day rule in the House this is technical but crucial. Liberals now have the votes to change the filibuster rule and will change it. Even pro-filibuster Russell (D, Ga.) admits some change is coming. But a booby-trap "compromise" is being prepared by Lyndon Johnson. The present Rule 22 requires a Constitutional 2/3 of the Senate (*i.e.* 64) to shut off debate. The "compromise" would reduce this to 2/3 of those "present and voting" (*i.e.*, if only 48 voted this would be 32). The fact is, however, that advocates of a civil rights measure have never in history got a 2/3 vote on a cloture effort. The only democratic rule is a *majority* rule. That is what the bipartisan liberal leaders, Douglas and Humphrey (D), and Case and Javits (R), seek.

All three of these battles, incidentally, will come right at the start of the new Congress.

Economic Advance

WE ARE BOUNDING BACK from the sharpest recession since the war. But even yet nobody can be sure whether the recovery pace will last or when we shall hit our normal rate of industrial advance—5 percent a year. A great deal turns on Detroit which is manufacturing brand new out-of-date cars. Will the public buy them?

Moscow, meanwhile, announces its seven year plan. This has its compensation: eventually Communists will get consumer goods which may change their outlook—a Communist with an electric blanket is half-corrupted. Nevertheless the contrast between America losing billions in production from a year's unnecessary recession while Moscow ploughs steadily ahead is humiliating and frightening.

For the life of us we can't accept Ken Galbraith's paradox in *The Affluent Society* (criticized in this magazine recently by Leon Keyserling) that we already have abundance and needn't worry about achieving greater production. We cheer Galbraith's other thesis, however, that we are getting the *wrong kind* of goods: tail fins instead of schools. His 18th chapter, "Theory of Social Balance" is wonderful on this: it sings.

Farm Re-Appraisal

THE NEW LIBERAL CONGRESS must also take another look at the vexed farm issue. A sweeping and amazing technological revolution has occurred on the farm. It should mean lower food prices for everybody. Instead of that the government is committed to buying up the embarrassing riches and thereby keeping the benefit off the market and away from city consumers who make up a larger and larger part of the population. In this fiscal year alone the government will pay out about $5 billions to keep farm prices high. Surely this problem must be re-examined. Statistics indicate that it is not the family-size farms but the huge corporate farms that are making some of the juiciest benefits from present subsidies.

Notes

THE THOUGHT of running against Rockefeller in 1960 fills the Democratic National Committee here with disgust; "Why can't we run against a Republican just *once*," a spokesman said plaintively. . . . Rockefeller, he added, would be another smile-in-the-fog candidate. . . . Democrats threaten to put "right-to-work" petitions on all the state ballots from now on; "we'll win every one!" they assert gleefully. . . . Liberal Republican Senators are in revolt against the Old Guard; they don't seem quite sure, however, whether Eisenhower will be on the side of the "Eisenhower Republicans."

T.R.B.

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Correspondence

► *Ed Murrow's Dream*

SIRS:

EDWARD R. MURROW's desire to have television "reflect, occasionally, the hard, unyielding realities of the world in which we live" (*NR*, Nov. 10) should be shared by everyone concerned with the state of our nation. But his

(Continued on page 23)

Threat to Berlin

MR. KHRUSHCHEV's original strategy of Peaceful Coexistence has now been supplemented—though not supplanted—by his new technique of Crisis Creation. This method of artificially provoking a war crisis at "places of his own choosing," and then trying to exploit the universal fear of war in order to gain a diplomatic advantage, was first rehearsed against Turkey in the "Syrian crisis" of the fall of 1957, under the fresh impression of Sputnik and of Russia's implied capacity to deliver intercontinental rockets. It went through a much improved repetition in the "Quemoy crisis" of the past month, which served the dual purpose of switching the spotlight away from the Middle East (where this summer's crisis did *not* start on Soviet initiative and did *not* issue to the Soviet's diplomatic advantage) and of using pressure on a point of American military and political weakness in order to force our government into diplomatic dealings with Communist China. And now the method is to be used right in the center of Europe—in Berlin—where the fronts have long been quiescent but where a clash would be potentially more dangerous than anywhere else because of the direct involvement of the great nuclear powers.

The opening threat was delivered in Khrushchev's farewell speech to the Polish delegation which had been touring the Soviet Union, and was promptly supported by Mr. Gomulka. The Soviet Government, he announced, because of the alleged violations of the Potsdam agreement by the West, no longer feels bound by the agreements on the four-power-status of Berlin (which in fact were concluded before Potsdam and reaffirmed four years afterward at the end of the blockade), and considers itself entitled to hand over its rights in Berlin to its East German satellite. Herr Ulbricht could then try to force the Western powers to come to terms with him by interfering with their access to Berlin; and lest anybody in the West should think of shooting his way through, Khrushchev added that any attack on his East German "allies" would be considered as an attack on the Soviet Union.

Soviet strategy was further clarified when the East German Premier, Herr Grotewohl, in a peace-loving statement two days later expressed regret that Western reaction had concentrated on the threat to Berlin; he explained that the future of the Western allies' access to the German capital was to be negotiated as part of a wider settlement for Germany. Explicit threats, clearly, will come only in alternate speeches, like shells on Quemoy on alternate days. The point of the whole operation is not so much to force us out of Berlin at this stage, but to make us recognize the East German Government—and with it the *status quo* in Eastern Europe. The analogy with the use of the Quemoy situation to promote the recognition of Communist China is obvious; and in case anybody might have overlooked it, even before Khrushchev's speech, the East German party boss had spoken of Quemoy and West Berlin as being equally politically absurd and militarily untenable.

It is worth inquiring why there has been this general return to threats

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as a weapon of Soviet policy in the course of the past year. No doubt the new consolidation of Soviet control over the "Socialist camp," and Khrushchev's own final victory over his domestic rivals have been factors in the change: he could not have afforded it before. No doubt, too, the Soviet advances in missile technique and the belief that they have turned "massive retaliation" into an empty phrase have been an important consideration. But probably the decisive reason is that the earlier Soviet version of the strategy of co-existence, if judged from the viewpoint of its principal objective, has been a failure.

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That objective was from the start, openly and unmistakably, to obtain Western recognition of Communist conquests in both Europe and Asia—recognition not merely as a military fact that can no longer be changed by military force, but as an irreversible political fact. That is what Khrushchev and his propagandists have meant all along by "ending the Cold War"; that is what he wanted a summit meeting to achieve; that is what he honestly believes is implicit in the "Laws of History" and in the military balance of power. Yet he has been unable so far to persuade any major sector of Western democratic opinion to accept that view. For apart from the permanent minority of Communists and their fellow-travellers, even critical opinion in the West has continued to draw a sharp distinction between those Communist regimes which have taken power by the force of a homegrown Communist movement, as in China, North Vietnam and Yugoslavia, and those which have been imposed by alien military force, as in most of Eastern Europe. The former have long been widely accepted as at least practically irreversible, and that is why the formal diplomatic recognition of Communist China by this country is now only a question of time. But the latter continue to be regarded, after the Hungarian tragedy even more than before, as something unnatural and basically intolerable, which we must continue to strive to change by political means short of war.

For that reason, the Western governments have been able, with broad support, to refuse a summit meeting on *Khrushchev's terms;* and it is these "Western delaying tactics" with regard to a summit meeting which Khrushchev himself has given as his reason for reverting to threats. For as Walter Lippmann has just suggested, Khrushchev may genuinely believe that the Western refusal to recognize Stalin's conquests as permanent implies the intention one day to reverse them by military action; he concludes from this that the Western position is based on a serious misreading of the facts of the balance of power; and from there it is an easy step to trying to demonstrate to us what he sees as the realities of power by his own version of brinkmanship. Khrushchev's new threats, then, are for the time being at least not an expression of a wish to resume the offensive; in fact, his methods are rather more cautious in areas where conditions favor a Soviet offensive, such as the Arab Middle East. He is threateningly advancing to the brink in order to protect his weak spots—and the weakest of them all is Eastern Germany.

The threat, of course, is only part of the operation. Along with the stage thunder of Crisis Creation, the soft music of co-existence continues to play on the twin themes of the new variant of the Rapacki Plan and a Four-Power meeting to prepare a peace treaty with Germany. Both offers are, in fact, more reasonable than any of their recent predecessors. The second edition of the plan put forward by Polish Foreign Minister Rapacki asks that in a first phase only no *new* nuclear weapons should be introduced into Central Europe—*i.e.* that neither the Bundeswehr nor the Warsaw Pact armies should get them—and proposes that the second stage, with its ban on all nuclear weapons in the area, should only come into force together with an agreement on control and a reduction of conventional forces. The proposed peace treaty admits that the four original occupying powers might first discuss the international status of Germany among themselves, before calling in the representatives of the "two German states." The snag remains that Khrushchev still refuses to discuss terms for German reunion, even if agreement on the future international status of Germany should be reached at such a conference, and that his offer is accompanied by solemn Soviet pledges "never to abandon our (East) German ally"—which seems to exclude in advance any agreement on a guaranteed neutral status for a reunited Germany. While Russia maintains that attitude, West Germany must clearly remain *our* ally, and it will be impossible to deny it nuclear weapons in the long run unless this is done as part of a general agreement to limit the atomic club to its present members.

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Both the new version of the Rapacki Plan and the proposal to negotiate a German peace treaty certainly offer scope for constructive Western counterproposals. We might well accept the first stage of the new Rapacki Plan —the nuclear standstill agreement for Central Europe— on a *temporary* basis, pending agreement not only on control and reduction of conventional forces, but on substantial progress with the German question within a reasonable time; we might also offer to *discuss* the terms of peace for a reunited Germany which would most contribute to European security — frontiers, arms limitations, neutrality—while refusing to *commit* ourselves to them unless the road could be cleared to the creation of a united Germany in freedom. But while such counterproposals would go far to meet Russia's legitimate security interests, they would necessarily deny the essential immediate objective of the Soviet moves—the recognition of the East German Communist regime. For such recognition would be compatible with our interests and principles in one

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case only—if it was clearly the immediate prelude to the elimination of that regime by agreement.

Of course, Khrushchev may believe that he is now strong enough to force that recognition on the West against our interests. But if his threat to Berlin is really based on such a calculation, and not merely on bluff, it is almost certainly mistaken. Militarily, West Berlin is even less defensible than Quemoy; but the East Germans would not even dream of attacking the allied garrison there because of the obvious risk of a world war. Economically, the city with its two million inhabitants certainly remains vulnerable to a blockade, or to minor harassments short of a full blockade; but for obvious political reasons the Soviets and their East German subordinates do not wish to repeat that experience; pressure this time is directed against the allied communications with Berlin rather than against the supplies of the civilian population. But they cannot prevent the relatively minor airlift which would be sufficient to keep the garrison supplied unless they take risks of interference with allied planes from which even Stalin recoiled; they have not the faintest chance of driving a political wedge between the Western powers and the Berliners; and above all, their own East German hinterland is politically infinitely more vulnerable to our countermeasures than is China.

The East German regime has no popular support, and if it tries to whip up a crisis atmosphere it is liable to produce panic and possible serious political unrest. A state whose population is steadily declining because its subjects are deserting it at the rate of 4,000-5,000 a week cannot afford to provoke its enemies. Even without a counterblockade, the proclamation of the Western powers' irreconcilable hostility to the Ulbricht regime in reply to any threats might shake the pseudo-state to its foundations.

What we should now do, apart from the obvious technical preparations for all eventualities, is to prepare our political reply. The moment Ulbricht & Co. try to interfere with allied communications, the Western governments should solemnly announce that their refusal to recognize the East German Communist regime is not a diplomatic technicality, but an expression of the fact that they regard the existence of this regime, imposed by Russia in defiance of international agreements, as an intolerable provocation, and its leaders as enemies both of their own people and of the West; that they will not deal with these odious puppets but remain inflexibly determined to get rid of them by peaceful means; and that they are ready to negotiate with the Soviet Government, and even with an alternative provisional government of Eastern Germany, on all conceivable guarantees for peace and security, provided only this one obstacle to a settlement is removed.

It does not take much imagination to foresee the effect such a proclamation would have not only on the people of Eastern Germany, but even on its civil service whose members know from fairly recent experience the wisdom of deserting a sinking ship in good time. Indeed, if the West shows any indication that it will respond in this way, it is unlikely that the threat to Berlin will ever materialize. The East German rulers know their own weakness, even if Mr. Khrushchev does not.

O CAPTAIN! MY CAPTAIN!

O CAPTAIN! my Captain! your fearsome trip is done,
It's sinking stations for the crew—the Democrats have won,
The tug boats toot, the foghorns hoot, I hear the people cheering,
The tide has turned, and all your hopes are swiftly disappearing,
Down—down—down,
Down to the ocean bed,
But on the poop my Captain stands
And warns of shoals ahead.

From California to Maine, from sea to shining sea,
Electors by the million hail the new ship's company,
For them the praise—for them bouquets—for them the bonfires burn—
New brooms will sweep, new hands will swab the decks from stem to stern,
New officers the ship will steer,
The quarter-deck will tread,
But you, no longer on the bridge,
Will be her figurehead.

SAGITTARIUS

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"It'll be interesting to find out what the other side is like"

Decision on Aid

In his Colombo Plan address in Seattle, Mr. Eisenhower spoke of "additions" and "adequate resources" for the Development Loan Fund—the sole US mechanism for granting low-interest loans to less-developed countries. What does this mean? He has given no green light to such men as Mr. C. Douglas Dillon, Under-Secretary of State for Economic Affairs, who have in mind some form of permanent financing for the Fund and who hope that the President's January Budget Message will include a DLF appropriation request of as much as $5 billion. We shall soon know whether Mr. Dillon or the economy-minded Director of the Budget has had the last word.

But if Mr. Dillon and his friends lose out, the fight must not be given up. It will be up to Congress to reverse the decision. It must do this not because it is "spendthrift," but because we cannot afford parsimony. For example, the last two years of this Administration are also the final two years of India's Second Five Year Plan. They are the years also during which the economies and political structures of Indonesia, Pakistan and Burma will undergo the most severe trials. Indeed, in the histories that are to be written, the next 24 months may appear to have mattered more than decades thereafter.

Clemency in Iraq

Fadhil Jamali, former foreign minister of Iraq, has been sentenced to hang by a military court in Baghdad. We are not in a position to comment on the trial or the verdict. Yet would not Premier Qassem be well advised to commute Jamali's sentence? To Westerners, Jamali was more civil servant than politician. A commutation would be a positive sign of the Iraq Revolution's strength and stability, as well as being in the best Arab tradition.

On the day of the uprising in Baghdad, we were dismayed by Ambassador Lodge's choosing the UN as the forum for his melodramatic attack on the Iraq Revolution, which he based almost entirely on an erroneous report of Jamali's dead body being dragged through the streets. Now, we are more than disturbed at the apparent lack of interest in Jamali's fate by his American "friends." Some Arabs have commented on the silence of these "friends" as evidence of the cynicism of the professional pro-Arab Americans. Now that the Iraq Revolution is respectable, they argue, Americans are uninterested in Jamali, the man. When Jamali was in power, he was praised as *the* Iraqi friend of the US. Invited to the White House, given an honorary degree at Columbia, applauded by the oil interests, he is now apparently expendable. It is even said that pleas for clemency by Americans will injure Jamali. The fact is that our policy makers often cannot distinguish between interference in the internal affairs of a country and their personal duty to speak up for a friend.

Cars vs. Customers

We commented two weeks back on some of the demonic automotive designs being prepared for us by car manufacturers and hinted that if the contraptions got much lower and longer there could be a renaissance in the bicycle industry. There is additional support for this theory in the fact that garage operators of New York have finally rared up and announced that they will charge 15 to 30 percent more for parking the 1959 monsters. They complain that the trend to bigness has cut their garages' capacity 15 percent in the last four years, while the vulnerability of the new shapes to bumps has caused their insurance rates to go up. Another complaint comes from the Automatic Car Washers Association, which says that its equipment can't get in and clean the dimpled recesses of the new models. And one line has been widened so it won't get on the platforms at all. It is old hat, of course, that the cars won't fit into many home garages —to which such designers as Harley Earl, who works for General Motors, reply that the sick consumer doesn't *want* his new car inside the garage—he wants it *outside*, impressing the neighbors.

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The Bull Market

IN THE WAKE of the election, the stock market soared to new all-time highs, surpassing not only 1929 but even the effervescent surge of 1956. The man who seeks to understand these ups and downs frequently dies a pauper. Nevertheless, it is difficult not to make some speculative guesses about what has been happening. Undoubtedly, rising stock prices reflect in some degree continuing economic recovery. To say the least of it, investors do not expect Democrats to interrupt that recovery. The natural tendency of a liberal Democratic Congress to spend money on public housing, school construction, urban renewal and public power, arouses quite happy fiscal anticipations for many businessmen in many industries, however often they vote Republican.

When all of this is said, the market still has its puzzles. One is the number of issues selling at prices as high as 40 times earnings, a ratio which would seem to discount and overdiscount most conceivable rates of growth in sales and profit. Such symptoms may point to the behavior which Lord Keynes identified long ago, the tendency of many operators to act on the basis not of what they believe but of what they believe that others believe. Which is to say that when speculators—and there are some still around—are convinced that general opinion anticipates higher prices, prudent behavior on their part implies buying stocks even though they personally differ from the market's judgment, this being one more example in economic life of the self-fulfilling prophecy.

There is this much comfort in the current bull market which no dispassionate observer could have taken in 1929: people who buy stocks today must put down 90 percent of the price in their own money; listing requirements are far sterner; and public regulation is detailed and pervasive. Thus, although it is still perfectly possible to lose one's shirt, at least the laundry's rules are now publicly posted.

He Lives!

WHY WASTE space on Nixon, a California correspondent asks: "Dick is a dead duck, *Viva* New York!" Now if Dick were a duck, that would be true: a winged duck is a doomed duck. But Dick is not a feathered thing, he is a chameleon. And chameleons are endowed, Webster says, with the "power of living for long periods." They also "can shoot out their tongue for a distance nearly equally their length." Mr. Stassen may wish to step on him; Mr. Rockefeller may think he *has* stepped on him; and California Democrats may hope they have buried him. But lo, he lives—"remarkable," as Webster adds, "for the changes of color of the skin, which are governed by nerve stimuli dependent upon the mood of the animal, as well as on surrounding conditions."

STUCK WITH A CONGRESSMAN

How They Defeated Brooks Hays in Little Rock

SINCE we have often said that every voter should get in some good licks for the candidate of his choice, we hasten to correct any impression that we approve the methods which elected Dr. Dale Alford to Congress from Arkansas' Fifth District. Dr. Alford, a respected oculist and schoolboard member, was announced as a write-in candidate, but the affixing of his name to the ballot required no pencil work on the part of voters; it was an outpouring of saliva, applied to ready-made stickers, that provided him with a majority of 51 percent in a poll of more than 61,000.

Because of the iron grip in which Governor Faubus currently holds the state of Arkansas, we think it unlikely that the methods which displaced Congressman Brooks Hays as the representative of the Little Rock area will be challenged locally. Mr. Faubus' Attorney General ruled the use of a sticker valid before the election; and the temper of the Arkansas Supreme Court will not be made more judicial by the election of Jim Johnson, the racial extremist whom Faubus (then running as a moderate) defeated for Governor in 1956. Johnson displaced a two-term justice to become the nominee for the post in this summer's Democratic primary.

Yet we think the facts about this election should be widely known and deeply pondered, particularly by Southern Congressmen who in the past have regarded their party primary as decisive. The facts are these:

Under Arkansas law, a candidate may announce himself any time up to 24 hours before a general election. (Alford announced eight days before the vote.)

Under the party plan of the Democratic Party in Arkansas, every candidate who offers himself in the primary

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must sign a pledge to support all of the party's candidates in the ensuing general election. Faubus signed this pledge when seeking the Democratic nomination for Governor last summer. So did Brooks Hays when he became a candidate to represent the Fifth District in Congress for his ninth term. In addition, Faubus and Hays made a personal agreement not to interfere in each other's campaigns.

But the manager of the surprise entry of Dr. Alford was Claude Carpenter, who together with Kenesaw Mountain Landis Matthews had served as the Governor's executive assistant in the Mansion during the days of negotiation preceding the Faubus-Eisenhower meetings in September, 1957. Subsequently, the Governor secured him the post of Attorney for the state Public Service Corporation, and he was likewise head of fund-raising for the state Democratic Party when he took leave to defeat Brooks Hays.

Also, immediately after Dr. Alford's announcement, the opening sentence of a letter sent from his headquarters to all election officials in the state, asking their cooperation, read: "Governor Faubus and this District need. . . . "

There is likewise evidence that the Governor himself, under cover, personally intervened on behalf of Alford. When queried about his pledge, he was quoted as saying he knew nothing of it; when asked whether he supported Brooks Hays, he said he didn't vote in the Fifth District.

The sticker offered on election day by the eye doctor's poll workers (who appeared somewhat myopic with regard to the statutory limit restricting their operations to a hundred feet from the polls) consisted of two parts. The voter was instructed to "detach here" the section reading:

"Paste sticker on your
Ballot and elect
Democratic Write-in Candidate for Congress."

The side which, when stuck on the official ballot, constituted a vote, bore: *"Dale Alford*————*X"* and a union label.

☆

In estimating the potency of use of a sticker, weight must be given to the fact that in a considerable number of polling places, in Arkansas, no provision is made for secrecy of the ballot. The voter presents himself at the local fire station or other polling place, shows his poll-tax receipt, gets his ballot, lays it on any hard surface that presents itself, marks it, puts it in the box. In a community that feels strongly enough about an issue to engage in a write-in campaign, public failure to use a sticker is an invitation to social disapproval.

Such is the new method of electioneering practised this November in Arkansas. The old methods, in forms familiar ever since Frank Graham was defeated for the Senate in North Carolina, were there too: a smear sheet, presenting the "Nigger-Lover" charge in pictorial form, showed Hays seated between two Negro bishops in Chicago this past summer, where, as president of the Southern Baptist Convention, he had accepted an invitation to speak before the Negro Baptist Convention; in contravention of state law this piece of campaign literature bore no indication of its sponsoring organization. But comparable items have been a feature of previous opposition to Mr. Hays'—and other moderates'—candidacies; the electoral sticker is something new.

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Since we believe that inside the state there will be no immediate reaction to the methods of the Alford election, we will follow with interest the Washington reaction to the appearance of Arkansas' new Congressman. We rather expect that he will receive a minimum of Capitol Hill services—from the barber shop to the guards' desks at the doors. Mr. Hays' popularity has been such that one Capitol employee unabashedly went out and got drunk on hearing of his elimination. But what we want to know is what the Democratic Party in the House of Representatives is going to do about giving Committee assignments to the man who caused one of only two defeats sustained by Democratic House members running for re-election.

The key will be found in the Speaker's attitude. Less than three weeks before the November 4 vote, since he was then running unopposed in the general election, Mr. Hays, who was well up on the House Foreign Affairs Committee and a member of the new Space Committee, had visited Mr. Rayburn in Bonham, Texas, to plan for the up-coming session.

This sorry business calls for reflection on the deterioration of Southern political life in the last five years:

In 1954, Orval Faubus ran for his first term for Governor as a moderate;

In 1955, Dale Alford, who comes from Little Rock's good people (his wife is a UDC and a DAR) became a member of the school board about a month before the board unanimously adopted its plan for the desegregation of Central High School; he did not assume the posture of a segregationist until just before Governor Faubus called out the National Guard two and a half years later;

In 1957, as Faubus prepared to run for his third term, Little Rock became a source of world headlines, damaging the free world everywhere;

In 1958, Arkansas' Fifth District was the scene of the invention of a campaign device making possible a quickie election from which not only reason but even literacy had been eliminated;

In recent months, the rate of out-migration of people from Arkansas (some of it undertaken to insure schooling) has accelerated; the rate of in-migration of industry to Arkansas has approached nil.

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Formosans Know What They Want

by LI THIAN-HOK

IT IS NOW the vogue to say that Chiang Kai-shek's Government has turned over a new leaf, and that it has accomplished miracles on Formosa. Voluminous statistics are poured forth by the Nationalist Government in support of its claims of progress in production, agrarian reform, local autonomy, education and so forth. Outsiders have been mightily interested. Professor Fairbank hopefully states in *The New Republic* of October 13, 1958, that this new development may be a useful corrective to the stereotype image of Nationalist corruption. Lord Lindsay tells us (*NR*, Oct. 6) that rice production reached 1.8 million tons in 1957 compared with 1.4 million tons in 1938. These are eminent scholars; yet is theirs the last word?

Lord Lindsay, for example, fails to mention that the increase in rice production was achieved at the sacrifice of other crops, notably sugar cane; and that population increased on Formosa in that period from 5.5 million to 10 million, so that per capita rice production actually has declined! While more than 50 percent of the Formosan rice crop was exported in 1940, by 1955 that figure dropped to 10.6 percent; and with the steady increase in population (which Chiang's regime eyes with approval as a source of manpower) Formosa may well be out of the rice export market in two to three years. Production of sugar, another export crop, had reached 1.4 million tons in 1938-39; it was down to .77 million tons in 1955-56. Industrial production similarly lags behind population growth, so that the per capita production index is lower, not higher, than it was during the period of Japanese rule of Formosa prior to World War II.

We must also scrutinize more closely the much applauded agrarian reforms of the Nationalists. In 1949, Governor Chen Cheng issued an order limiting maximum land rent to 37.5 percent of the value of the main crops grown on the land. This represented an over-all reduction of 12.5 percent from previous rent rates. However, by compelling farmers to sell their "surplus" rice at low fixed prices in exchange for fertilizers supplied by ECA, the Nationalist Government deprived peasants of all they had supposedly gained from the rent reduction.

This may be illustrated by taking the experience of an average tenant farmer. In 1949, he produced 1.32 tons of rice, or the equivalent of $224 at the market price of $170 per ton. His gain from rent reduction was 12.5 percent of the $224, or $28. Now the government agency, which monopolized fertilizer distribution, would demand 1.5 tons of rice in exchange for one ton of fertilizer whereas .4 ton of rice should have been adequate. (Market price of fertilizer was then $70 per ton.) For each ton of fertilizer it provided, the government made in profit 1.1 tons of rice, or $187. Since the average farmer utilized 186 kg of fertilizer, his loss from exchange was 18.6 percent of $187, or approximately $35. Thus, his gain from rent reduction was less than the amount the government took away from him with its device of fertilizer exchange program.

The land redistribution program which was started in 1953 likewise deserves a skeptical closer look. The larger landholder was required to sell to the Nationalist Government all of his land in excess of three hectares of medium-grade paddy field. He was compensated at the price of 2.5 times the value of the annual main crop. Seventy percent of the government purchase price was paid him in commodity bonds to be redeemed in rice and sweet potatoes in 20 installments over ten years; and 30 percent in the form of stocks issued by four government-owned enterprises. But from the moment it was issued the value of the stock began to fall spectacularly!

In exchange for the commodity bonds, the farmer whose land had been taken over could either get rice or cash. But the government would offer only the poorest grade of old rice, which is hardly edible; the alternative is to get the equivalent value in cash, not at the market price, but at a lower rate fixed by the government. The upshot is that the landowner was, and is, inadequately and unfairly compensated.

The government then resold the land to tenant farmers, but demanded good-quality rice in payment, rather than cash. Thus by levying high-grade rice from tenant farmers and selling it at market price, while offering poor-grade rice or its equivalent at a lower fixed price as compensation, the Nationalist Government has found in the land reform another source of profit. Furthermore, simultaneously with the launching of the land reform program, all sorts of taxes were raised on the ground that the farmers could now afford heavier levies. Most of them are presently in debt, and trying desperately to

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raise enough rice to pay for the increased taxes, the land and the fertilizer.

It is claimed that there has been great expansion in secondary schools and universities. But a good deal of expansion resulted, not from net increase in the number of students or facilities, but from renaming pre-existing schools. The increased number of junior high schools in the counties is to be expected in view of the larger population. But facilities are poor and the quality of teachers is extremely low. At the college level, competition for admission is keen, the ratio of applicants to be admitted often exceeding 10 to 1. The Formosans resent the fact that overseas Chinese students, who can enter colleges without entrance examination, are unfairly cutting down their already limited opportunity. As for elementary school education, it was universal under the Japanese.

It is said, too, that progress has been made in local government, as if the mechanical election of local councils, mayors and the Provincial Assembly signifies democratic participation in government by the people. It does not. In the first place, there is a peculiar dual government in the "province" of Formosa—a Central Government and a Provincial Government. The former has deprived the latter of practically all government functions but that of collecting taxes. Though Formosans dominate the "legislative" organs at the provincial level and below, they have no power to make decisions of any sort. Members of these bodies can only ask immaterial questions, or run small errands for their constituencies. They cannot criticize, they cannot legislate. The Central Government, which makes all laws and policies and executes them, is under the exclusive control of the Chinese refugees. What we have in Formosa today, therefore, is Chinese colonialism, if we define colonialism as the subjugation of one people by another.

Second, elections in Formosa are invariably rigged. The Nationalist Party is financed directly by the government treasury, which is a great advantage in election campaigns. Chiang's party controls the press and the radio. It monopolizes the supervision of balloting and the counting of the votes. (This practice is called a "safety device" in popular vernacular.) It can and has used the police to harass the campaigning of non-party candidates. A successful, non-party candidate for mayor finds his Nationalist subordinates uncooperative and provincial aid to his city curtailed or denied. In one instance at least a forged charge of bribery was used to put a non-party mayor-elect in jail.

Finally, as all three participants in *The New Republic's* discussion on Formosa's future—Messrs. Lindsay, Fairbank and Warner—seem to agree, there is strict police control and lack of civil liberties on Formosa today. As Professor Fairbank so aptly points out, Chiang Kai-shek's anti-Communism is a personal thing, it does not imply defense of individual freedom or a rule of law. The necessary preconditions for evolving a new democratic order out of the present autocracy simply do not exist.

As Lord Lindsay has noted, many Formosans do join the Nationalist Party nowadays. But why? Candidates for office join since it is virtually impossible to get elected otherwise. Many join to get a job or have a better chance for promotion. Almost all college graduates join because they have little alternative. All male college graduates are required to take two years' military training, a large part of which is devoted to the study of Three People's Principles, the teachings of Chiang Kai-shek, etc. (brainwashing, Nationalist style). During this period all are urged to join the party. Those who hedge or refuse are ordered out of their beds several times during a night for questionings by the Political Officers. This goes on until the victims break down and yield. Most Formosan Party members are actually anti-Nationalist in sentiment.

To summarize, there has been considerable economic improvement on Formosa—thanks to American aid—since the 1945-49 period, when the economy was on the verge of collapse due to corruption, systematic plunder and a runaway inflation. Nevertheless, largely because of heavy military expenditures and population growth, the standard of living is still lower than it was during Japanese days. Does this mean Formosans long for the return of the Japanese? Not at all. Although there was material well-being under the Japanese, the Formosans were against their rulers because of social discrimination and the lack of civil and political liberties. In these latter aspects, the Nationalist regime is no different from the Japanese; the situation is worse in that there is not even legal protection for the ordinary citizens in Formosa today.

Why then, it may be asked, do the nine million Formosans seem to be either indifferent or ambivalent toward the Nationalist regime? The reason is simple: fear. Ultimately, Nationalist control of the island is based on its highly institutionalized use of terror. All Formosans, to a larger or lesser degree, have cause to be afraid. They witnessed a large-scale massacre in March, 1947; they know that there are still thousands of political prisoners on Green Island (a penal colony off the southeastern coast of Formosa) and in the over-crowded penitentiaries, most of them young university students. Practically every Formosan has a friend or relative who has been executed for political offense. The intellectuals, who should be the most articulate, are perhaps the most inhibited, because as a group they have been subjected to the severest pressures.

Mutual suspicion effectively cuts off candid exchange of opinions. When asked their opinion of the Nationalist regime or the future of Formosa, most Formosans are likely to hedge or use euphemism—for example, that they want to see Formosa revert to its provincial status,

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an oblique attack on Chiang's localized super-government. To express a desire for independence is, of course, tantamount to treason and punishable as such. This fact explains the difficulties correspondent Denis Warner (*NR*, Nov. 3) seems to have encountered in ascertaining the wishes of the Formosans, but it does not support his conclusion that they do not know what they want.

Were they given a chance to express their true feelings without danger to life or liberty, a great majority of Formosans would favor independence under a genuinely democratic government of their own. There is no doubt that the idea of independence appeals to all of them, though many want a transitional UN trusteeship as a preliminary step toward independence. Nor is this desire for independence simply a reaction to Nationalist policies and practices. The significance of the February revolution of 1947 lies in the self-discovery of the Formosan nationality, the development of which goes back to the 17th Century. Half a century of Japanese rule contributed further to the shaping of this sense of national identity by inculcating in Formosans respect for the rule of law and appreciation of scientific methods and efficiency, sanitation and the value of education. After more than three centuries of geographic isolation and common historical experiences, it is not strange that we find a distinct Formosan culture and a strong, if repressed, sense of national consciousness.

The undercurrent of discontent is highly unsettling in view of the growing power potential of Formosans in business, government, and the armed forces. This is especially true now that Chiang's renunciation of the use of force to reconquer the mainland has sown the seeds of doubt as to the very *raison d'etre* of his regime—doubts which may well mark the beginning of the end for the Nationalists. Since there is no legitimate channel for the expression of political dissent, no outlet for frustrated aggression, violent internal convulsion appears inevitable. The question is when and how it will erupt.

The aspiration for self-determination on the part of the nine million Formosans offers the best chance for—not just a non-Communist—but a democratic, Formosa. The energy and will to defend the island against Communist aggression and subversion, the desire to build up a free society, are there. But will there be sufficient wisdom in the US and the free world to channel this aspiration to a constructive purpose before it is too late?

Whose Interests Interest the FCC?

by WILLIAM COSTELLO

ONE OF THE anomalies of Washington is that the last Congress could for months investigate an agency like the FCC without ever being able to comprehend why that agency is not doing the job Congress intended it should. That intention, when the Federal Communications Act was framed in 1927 and revised in 1934, was to preserve the airwaves for the people, and to license the use of broadcast frequencies for the public's benefit. On both counts the FCC is failing.

The Harris Subcommittee on Legislative Oversight did manage to smell out a few major and minor instances of unethical or possibly illegal conduct, but it scarcely more than alluded to the subject nearest the heart of the average listener—the subject of better public service in radio and television programs.

This report by WILLIAM COSTELLO, *veteran radio commentator and White House correspondent for the Mutual network, is the outgrowth of a study made privately for the author's colleagues in the Association of Radio-Television News Analysts.*

Yet it is an easily demonstrable fact that, since television elbowed its way into broadcasting, public service programs have been steadily downgraded. More and more stations carry fewer and fewer programs dealing with education, religion, agriculture, talks, discussion, and community issues, even when the national networks incur heavy expenses to provide material of this kind. As a whole the broadcast industry is phenomenally profitable, but, as Edward R. Murrow more than implied in his comments in *The New Republic* (Nov. 10), the richer it gets in advertising, the poorer its showing in public service. Moreover, no enlightened effort has been made in Washington to defend the program spectrum which is supposed to reflect civic interest and well-being. The FCC, which is primarily responsible, is afraid to assert its lawful authority; and Congress, which was the first to proclaim that the broadcast bands belong to the people, has shown a singular unwillingness to call the FCC to account or tighten up the basic statute.

Last summer there was a stir of interest in the in-

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dustry when word went out that the FCC had finally decided to assert its legal responsibility to encourage better programing, but in the end the report proved nothing more than wishful thinking.

What happened was this: When 10 stations in Atlanta applied for the periodic renewal of their licenses, the FCC postponed action on all 10 applications and asked for more information on their program content. The implication—at least as outsiders interpreted the action—was that the Commission would give closer scrutiny than usual to the kind of "community service" that the Atlanta stations were offering, possibly as a warning to other stations that glowing promises made in previous applications would have to be followed by better performance.

It soon developed that the Atlanta case was nothing more than another bureaucratic tribal dance. The request for information actually came, not from the Commission itself, but from staff attorneys, and consisted of a Form 309-b Letter of the kind usually referred to as an "informal inquiry." Four (those with experienced attorneys) immediately complied with the request for supplementary information, and received assurances that their replies were satisfactory. The littler stations, operating with inadequate staffs and inexperienced lawyers, waded through varying degrees of paper work and documentation, then sent attorneys or other emissaries to conciliate the FCC's legal staff with promises of reform. Most of the effort was wasted, because no matter how lax their program standards it was almost a 100 percent certainty that in the end they would receive their renewals.

It could hardly be otherwise, since careful examination shows the FCC has no affirmative policy on programing. Almost from the beginning there have been two schools of thought within the agency.

> *School I* holds that the function of the FCC is purely technical—that it should license frequencies and supervise the accuracy of their transmissions; should prevent the use of the broadcast spectrum by persons threatening national security, or by persons who might be commercially irresponsible. Otherwise, the FCC should not meddle in any way with what may be broadcast.
>
> *School II* goes one step further. It contends that the FCC must interpret "public interest, convenience and necessity" in more than just a technical sense. This group favors, for example, close scrutiny of a station's performance record in any renewal proceedings; it would require new applicants to commit themselves to programing patterns that would affirmatively serve the public interest. It would hold the industry to a high standard of social responsibility.

By and large *School I* has been triumphant, although for a time, under the impact of changing political fortunes, the philosophy of the FCC veered coquettishly first in one direction, then another.

In 1946, under the chairmanship of Paul Porter, the Commission was prepared—or for a time appeared to be prepared—to defend policies that would have required every broadcast licensee to offer substantial proof of community service before being granted a renewal. In a show of righteousness, the Commission even picked its own "horrible example" of bad programing — the Hearst station, WBAL, in Baltimore—and pilloried it publicly. When the chips went down, however, and when Drew Pearson filed a competing application for WBAL's license, the Commission's instinctive conservatism asserted itself. Dealing in a commodity which by law was not property but which by custom had begun to be vested with property rights, the Commission feared to revoke WBAL's license. Pearson's application was turned down, although it seemed evident to many that almost anyone could have offered the public better programing than the WBAL management of that period.

From the quasi-liberalism of the Porter era, the FCC has steadily grown more conservative, more property-conscious, more timid. The tendency, starting under Truman, was accentuated when the Eisenhower Administration took office. Since 1953, almost all pretense of regulation has been abandoned, and the ancient and discredited doctrine of *laissez-faire* embraced.

As Administration policies began to crystallize in the early months after the Eisenhower takeover, the FCC tended to agree with those who regarded radio as an obsolete adjunct of the burgeoning television industry, a nuisance which ought to be left to die quietly by the side of the road with a minimum of attention from the federal government.

As late as 1956 this attitude was reflected in a demand that the application form for radio license renewals ought to be simplified, at least in Section 4-a which calls for a percentage breakdown of station programing. The proposition was advanced that radio and television were radically different. Entertainment and the big money in advertising had gravitated to television; it was assumed that radio as an advertising medium had nothing to sell but spot announcements and that its programing would have to be governed by that consideration.

It was logical, from that point of view, to argue that the number of program categories in the application form might as well be reduced from 10 to perhaps three or four. It was even suggested that these limited few might be "Music, News, Sports, Entertainment." This would have eliminated such categories as "Religion, Agriculture, Education, Talks, Discussion"—in short, it would have eliminated every specific allusion to what might be called balanced public service programing.

Such a proposal was actually submitted to the second Hoover Commission and relayed to the FCC. Two years ago, the proposal was passed along to the Budget Bureau's

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advisory council on federal reports, which turned the suggestion over to an industry subcommittee. At that point the idea was quietly done to death; staff experts at the bureau merely say it never got off the ground, without trying to remember exactly why. The official explanation is that radio and television function under the same legal umbrella and ought to file the same reports. After being kicked back and forth for two years, the much-debated revision of Part 4-a of the renewal form is now awaiting final approval by the FCC Commissioners.

This episode boils down to the fact that public service programing, or even reports on public service shows, are largely distasteful to station owners and the FCC alike. In this field as elsewhere the philosophy of regulation fights a running battle for its life. The FCC might have seen more than procedural significance in the failure to kill off public service categories in the renewal form; it might have reasserted the corollary that listeners are entitled to a conscientious, ever-wakeful watchdog in program policy-making. There has been no such awareness. The accent has been on the routine of licensing, sales, transfers, wave lengths, antenna design, power output, and so on. And in a further abdication of moral responsibility, the FCC even recommended that licenses be granted for five instead of three years, a practice that would relax the regulatory tether even further.

For years the FCC has teetered back and forth on the horns of a regulatory dilemma. On the one hand, it is inhibited by stern Congressional command against any attempt at censorship over what is broadcast. Believers in *laissez-faire* have used this section in the law to argue that even a critical scrutiny of programing can be interpreted as a kind of subtle, indirect pressure or censorship. Using the plea of editorial freedom as both a blank check and a smokescreen, the industry has insisted on dealing with the FCC on a strictly statistical basis. It reports quantitatively on its program content but not qualitatively, and the result is a hodge-podge that defies any interpretation.

At the same time, the FCC is constrained by order of Congress to protect the "public interest" in the broadcast industry. Patently this calls for a definition of "interest." The definition depends on which segment of the public is paramount, licensees or listeners. At various times, when the Commission felt strong enough to assert itself, the courts have effectively supported its contention that it could consider programing and listener-interest in passing on renewals and granting licenses. More recently the Commission has shown no inclination to fight the listeners' battles.

Yet, can anyone be so myopic as to suppose that the public is interested primarily in such matters as wave lengths, business probity and advertising ethics? Obviously, while people do have an interest in basic technological problems, their first interest is in what they see and hear, on the content of the programs entering the home. Over the years, though, not a handful of broadcast station licenses or renewals have been denied on the sole ground that a station's programs did not serve "public interest, convenience and necessity."

If this seems a singular history, it is no more so than the official gobbledygook offered to explain it. You will be told that, if there are no complaints against a station, and if there are no competing applications for a license, the presumption is that the license-holder has lived up to the requirements and has earned a renewal. If, in addition, the FCC goes through the motions of asking for supplementary information on programing content, it can argue that all the requirements have been met.

What the agency doesn't acknowledge is that this method of handling renewals represents a grudging minimum rather than a whole-hearted effort to comply with the law. If the FCC were to go all-out for compliance, it would also acknowledge this fact: that the Federal Communications Act says renewals shall be handled in the same manner as original applications; and further that, on its own initiative, the Commission can order public hearings on any application. The record shows that few public hearings are held on renewals, and fewer still on the ground of inadequate programing.

It goes without saying that licensees are content with this practice. So far as rival entrepreneurs are concerned, there is no inclination to file costly competing applications, hire attorneys, and go to the time and expense of demanding hearings. The WBAL precedent has stood for more than a decade, with no hint from the Commission that the policy might be reconsidered or reversed.

Yet it would be simple enough, in many instances, for the Commission to justify a call for hearings. The woods are full of "horrible examples" which are deplored by public-spirited broadcasters. For a typical case history, take this one: a radio outlet which happens to be the only station serving a one-county market. It is 90 percent commercial. The music it plays comes from records it gets free. Once a week it has a sustaining hour of popular operatic music; these records come from a listener. Public service is strictly transcribed spots, and once a week a transcribed quarter-hour that is distributed gratis by a foreign country. There is nothing controversial on the station; no talks, no discussions, no forums, and nothing local except the commercials and any news that shows up on the ticker.

It is argued, and I suppose not implausibly, that there is nothing sinister in the Commission's failure to hold hearings; for the shabby fact is that Congress has never, since the creation of the FCC, voted enough money to hire examiners, engineers and attorneys for all the *de novo* hearings on renewals that would be required to give careful scrutiny to program standards. Under the law all stations must apply every three years for an extension of their permits. Since there are now more than

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4,000 radio and television stations, this means there are approximately 1,300 renewal applications a year or more than a hundred a month. In cases of this kind, full hearings would take days or weeks, depending on the size of a station and the complexity of its operation; and the FCC would need a small army of additional examiners to be able to comply with the spirit of the statute. In the circumstances it is easier for the Commission to shy away from innovations. A staff already overburdened shrinks from the thought of the extra paper work and the possible resulting litigation.

Still, those with an intimate knowledge of the regulatory problem in broadcasting insist that the question of hearings goes to the very heart of the matter. There can be no possibility of reform in station programing until station managers know they may be compelled to defend their programing the next time they apply for renewal of their licenses. Moreover, the absence of hearings inevitably tends to discourage competition. If licensees get renewals by default, without ever having to prove they are fulfilling their promises to serve the public interest, there exists an almost impossible burden of proof on a rival who might feel more entitled to the license.

Station XOOX in Podunk may have absolutely no concept of public service; it may pour out commercials one-to-the-minute and spin rock-and-roll platters all day every day. There may be others in the community who would like to run a station and would be prepared to do a better job. But so long as Station XOOX owns the license (or thinks it owns it), and so long as the FCC renews that license without any kind of qualitative judgment, no competitor is likely to get a foot in the door.

Parenthetically, it is only fair to note that networks, although they are unlicensed and subject only to the vaguest regulation, and although they have other and no less conspicuous programing sins to atone for, have nevertheless shown themselves over the years to be the chief custodian of the industry's conscience in public service programing. They make a varied and commendable effort to serve the public interest, only to be frustrated—as Mr. Murrow pointed out—by the XOOX's who refuse to clear time for what is educational or enlightening.

THE really sinister product of official negligence is that, in the course of time, broadcast licenses which were originally intended to issue only temporarily on evidence of good faith and meritorious public service, are now assuming more and more the stature of private property. Little by little, their possessors regard them as they would a parcel of land—as a freehold in fee simple, a vested right. The Congressional doctrine that the airwaves belong to the people is being slowly smothered. And Congress has been willing to acquiesce in this.

Far from trying to correct the shortcomings of the Federal Communications Act, or tackle the evils of the present licensing system, those in Congress and the FCC who have a vested interest in their mistakes are beginning to lend a sympathetic ear to an elaborate new rationale.

This new gimmick is a casuistry known as "specialized programing." Now that there are so many broadcast outlets, the argument goes, why should the FCC insist that every station follow the same program pattern? The community doesn't need six or 16 stations unless those stations can provide program diversity and can appeal to different segments of the listening audience.

Let's admit, they say, there is room for some stations with "balanced" program patterns; for some concentrating on popular music and news; for others rocking and rolling; for the good music station, and for those appealing to racial or national minorities, farmers, teenagers and so on. The advocates of this line of reasoning can sound very persuasive, but their argument comes down to the fact that there are only two kinds of stations: those that comply with the law and those that do not. Broadcasting licenses were not intended merely to create new advertising media but to insure a responsible public service.

The FCC's chairman, testifying some months ago before the Senate Judiciary Committee, virtually admitted that he regards the Federal Communications Act as unenforceable. In a classic example of weasel-wording, he told the committee (emphasis supplied):

> The policies of this commission have been, *where feasible,* to further the broadest possible variety and balance in the programing of radio and television stations, and to further the public interest, convenience and necessity *whenever possible* where it relates to broadcasting. The absence of direct authority and statutory jurisdiction over specific programs has not been construed as disabling this commission from adopting policies to encourage over-all improvements in programing as distinguished from encouraging or discouraging any particular program. . . .

According to that view, the FCC feels lion-hearted enough to strive for balanced programing "where feasible"—but don't get the notion that that's a firm commitment! The agency likewise feels entitled to promote public interest, convenience and necessity *"whenever possible,"* but it feels no legal constraint to obey the Congressional mandate putting public interest first. A more cynical construction of a statute would be hard to find.

And finally, on the advice of some hair-splitting legal bureaucrat, the head of the agency backs in with a cautious double negative and allows as how—maybe, perhaps—the Commission does have jurisdiction over program content (as an abstract concept) if it wants to assert itself.

The House Subcommittee on Legislative Oversight made a considerable spectacle of itself cavorting in the headlines with random cases of official misconduct, but it never so much as laid a glove on the real venality of the FCC. That remains to be done by the 86th Congress.

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BOOKS & COMMENT

The Baroness Entertains

by Barbara Howes

A THIRD of the way along the coast road from Copenhagen to Elsinore lies the village of Rungsted Kyst, and near it, with a good view of the Sound—and of Sweden beyond on a clear day—lives Isak Dinesen (the Baroness Blixen), whose sixth book has just been published in this country. (One of them, under another pseudonym, appeared during World War II.)

Having given over Rungstedlund to be a bird sanctuary, Isak Dinesen remarked a short time ago at a press conference held there in connection with this book: "It is quite an occasion for me to receive you in this house, which is no longer mine, and whose true owners are now on their wings. God bless them and bring them home to their old country, Africa. I've been asked to say a few words also about a little bird that Gyldendal [her Danish publisher] is letting out of its cage. God bless it and may it have wings."

Anecdotes of Destiny, by Isak Dinesen (Random House; $3.75)

Isak Dinesen spent 17 years on a coffee plantation in Kenya: she is, like the birds who now own her estate, one who travels between the poles of North and South, for there has always been this geographic — and imaginative — range in her work. Two of the longest Anecdotes are set in Norway, which, from the point of view of relatively temperate Denmark, lies psychologically as well as physically on the edge of the Arctic Circle; two others are set in countries of the East, and the last in Denmark.

All the stories are closely related, revolving as they do, in different ways, around one complex theme. So rich in imagery and so intricate in plot are her tales that it is easy to overlook the fact that they are based on precise concepts. In the case of *Anecdotes of Destiny*, the subject is that ancient dichotomy—Imagination and Reality, Dream and Fact, Vision and Sense; the mystic view of life and that of everyday. The tales take up these opposites, turn them about, play with them, and look deeply into their relation one to the other. Like Wallace Stevens, she knows that the two worlds, however far apart, must come to terms with one another; or, rather, that the imaginative person must come to terms with his own world. "This young man is dangerous," says a wily minister to the King of Shiraz of a student who wishes to speak with angels, "in as much as he has great dreams. But he is harmless, and will be easy to handle, in as much as he has neglected the study of our real world, in which dreams are tested."

The Immortal Story, with a wonderful blending of wit and grace, tells of an old man who tried to turn a fable into fact. "He dislikes pretense," says the narrator, "he dislikes prophecies, he likes facts. He has made up his mind to have the story happen in real life, to real people." And the author later has occasion to ask: "Was it then a matter of life and death to make a story come true?" These anecdotes seem at times to dream, to move as effortlessly as a canoe along a creek, and at others they rush headlong; but whatever the pace, the reader participates in the action as at a play; never knowing what turn it will next take, but confident in the writer's sure hand.

Two of the tales deal specifically with the rôle of the artist. Like Willa Cather, some of whose finest stories were about opera singers and their relation to their art, Isak Dinesen was concerned in two earlier works with the character of Pellegrina Leoni, a great diva. Here the heroine of *Tempests* is a talented young actress. And Babette, the culinary artist of *Babette's Feast*, quotes M. Papin, a former opera star: "It is terrible and unbearable to be an artist, to be encouraged to do, to be applauded for doing, his second best. Through all the world there goes one long cry from the heart of the artist: Give me leave to do my utmost!"

Isak Dinesen does not confuse her stories with herself, nor identify herself with her talent; her intelligence would not allow it. The writer must, she seems to say, have the gift of second sight, in order to see ahead through the masses of possibility to where his story leads. She works in the difficult medium of the fable; and though her tales make their appearance decked out in the trappings of legend, the human reference is always there. She has her own way of writing out what she herself experienced.

EARLY this year I had the good fortune to meet Isak Dinesen at Rungstedlund. Her comfortable stuccoed manor-house was not at all the shadowy palazzo that I had, from her *Seven Gothic Tales*, half expected. The sunny livingroom in which she received me, with its fireplace and great handsome iron stove, had little about it of the salon. And the manner of the writer before me, in spite of her recent grave illness, was not at all that of those literary ladies whose only profundity is in their lack of interest in anything but themselves: the Baroness was at once charming, modest, and matter-of-fact; and the conversation ranged over a variety of subjects, all the way from the nature of lions in their African habitat to the workings of an American dishwasher. Her *Last Tales*—which most reviewers took to be literally her last work—had just appeared; she mentioned, to my surprise, that another collection of stories, *Anecdotes of Destiny,* was nearly completed and that she had wanted the two books to appear simultaneously; but that her publishers were opposed to the idea. The two volumes are entirely different: the *Last Tales* is much more a general collection and includes several sections of the long novel, *Albondocani*, on which she is now at work and which will, she says, be completed before her death.

There is in the work of Isak Dinesen a trace of the *gamine*, the gypsy; at one moment she delights in poking fun at dullness, at the next, her mood shifts and the stories are pervaded by a profound sense of tragedy. Perhaps, I thought as I watched her, her totem animal is some sort of bird, not fussily hopping about, but cool, aware, beautiful, at home in many climates and deeply conscious of the complexities of life.

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North China and the Children

by Richmond Lattimore

POND COUNTRY, and when willows in their pools
dream and loom back the trailing tresses above
that weep, or as lily pads where frogs squat plump
and dense, or where ducks cruise and color slats
of water, and all still ponds in all still forms
bring back the pavilion on the lotus-pool
and the painted bridge, the river and its drops
slid down and pearled from the bent oar that rowed
my father's boat, when I was five years old,
there where the bastion of the city wall
broke like some antedeluvian stony ship
at Pao-ting-fu above the water-flowers.

Not one North China brat lives with his now
self as his own twin, nor as such whose first
home was not a rented temple, who do not know
that graves are pointed mounds of earth, that bricks
are baked in country kilns where you can find
dead babies if you dare look, who have not ridden
donkeys with bells on strings around their necks.
How can they live like us, if they came alive
by vitreous plumbing and grew strong among
sanitary odors? That man never smelled
who has not smelled North China in her pride.
This is no matriculation to the rear.
All we once children find the willowy pool,
splash down, pull the surface back in over us,
and douse in that green jelly where we were born.

The stone arch painted its own dream and form
as glaucous oval where the boat slid through,
and the child's hand trailed in wonder and water-lily
stems. But this is just nursery, and the bed-time
milk, and the never-time of the fairy book
greenly enciphered in the stone-grown heart,
and not the years' content, only what squeezes out
in drops shining, but part of a piece of now.
I mean not China, only me and us.

We, once the dowered barbarians in the land,
Goths on the capitol, dream now sadly back
as heirs to a kingdom gone. At Pei-tai-ho
the mountains, the Monastery Cliff, and Buddha's
Tooth, and one inarticulate village lost
in a gulf of stone behind the Great Wall, portended
and met the sea, where Chinese fancy ended
in Lotus Hills and Tiger Rocks, against
the tea-and-cricket, the whiskey-soda names,
West End, East Cliff, Lighthouse Point, where the children
of missionaries and importers and the marines
dabbled their pale toes in the North China Sea.
How gone, how our feet stand now on no times.

Changelings with me remember what's no longer
ours, nor all enchantment. Once pneumonic plague
whitened the snowless freeze in the Gobi wind,
and dogs wrestled the top boards from their nails
on coffins for cold meat. The facts come home.
Not ours the beggar with no face, but think
how lady meant European, woman meant
Chinese, how we sat in rickshas and made
our runners race. They've pitched the Foreign Devils,
that's us, and fallen for new foreign devils,
worship the goblin Marx and the bannered face.
Little we deserved either, but let it be.
Some of them loved us when we were little, and we
loved them again, and the love that floats from a gone
amah-and-coolie world could still be love
that burns in blue above the festered corpse.

Children we shall not go back where they hauled
the nets in surf, seined flopping silvers, where thick
black boats were beached and roped to skinny anchors
that smelled of dead crabs under where the child
dried in his bliss, or where the diver slid
past the medusa steering her cold blobs
as azure emblems of a sea how lost.
And still the lighthouse gazes from the cliff
toward Chin-wan-tao, but we shall not come again,
nor to the stone arch nor the lotus-pond,
no more. But Chinese bells are in our heads.

POND COUNTRY is in my mind, and now at New Hope
the willows on the towpath, and all still
waters mean return, and five years old, they mean
green swimmings of the children, whose now here
floats on a scum of nowhere, but is theirs.

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A Slow Burn in the South

by Charles Shapiro

CROSS DAMON, the lippy hero of Richard Wright's unfortunate novel, *The Outsider*, felt that his life was disastrous, because, "in my heart . . . I'm innocent . . . that's what made the horror." He believed that his problem was one of the relationship of himself to himself, and he drank, not to feel better, but to feel "less." A real, existentialistic cat.

In his latest novel, however, Wright chooses to describe the growth of a less sophisticated Negro, the son of a wealthy, opportunistic businessman in a small Mississippi city. Fishbelly suffers and learns within the framework of his own Southern life, and his talk is fortunately free from either Marxist or existentialist bromides. As a result we have a powerful novel reminiscent of *Native Son*, one that smashes into experience, treating it directly, not by analogy.

The Long Dream, by Richard Wright (Doubleday; $3.95).

Tyree Tucker, Fish's father, runs a colored undertaking establishment while secretly controlling much of the Negro vice in Clintonville. Uneducated but proud, he poses as a crafty conqueror before his son but achieves his business success by giving the whites what they most want. He has mastered the art of Uncle Tomming, putting on public displays of mirth, idiocy, and fawning. Tyree's uneasy relationships with the white powers of Clintonville finally come to a terrifying, self-destructive end, and in the process Fish learns to hate his father's sell-out at the same time gradually coming to understand why Tyree had no other practical alternative. From the age of six, to eighteen, when he flees Mississippi, Fish slowly discovers that it is impossible to be both a successful and sensitive Southern Negro: white women can tease but they may never be touched; the police may be used but they can never be treated as equals; flight is often the best answer to injustice; and, above all, a black man's dreams can never come true, at least not today in the deep South.

Tyree begs his son to play along with his tormentors but to use them:

> . . . Arguing with 'em is a waste of time. They just don't understand these things. I know; you at the age when too much sap's rising up in you and you don't know how to git rid of it. I'll show you what to do and the *right* way to do it. It ain't hard, Fish. . . . And we can handle these dumb white folks, son. White folks see eleven inches on a foot rule; we black folks see the whole damn rule. Fish, the only way to git along with white folks is to grin in their goddam faces and make 'em feel good and then do what the hell you want to behind their goddam backs! And I'm going to show you how to do it. . . . A white man always wants to see a black man either crying or grinning. I can't cry, ain't the crying type. So I grin and git anything I want.

To which Fish can only reply, "But, Papa, crying and grinning ain't winning."

As Tyree's submission becomes more acute so does Fish's suffering. It becomes obvious that the Chief of Police is right when he screams out that he can't understand Fish. "You're one of these new kind of niggers . . . I don't trust you!" And this is the heart of *The Long Dream*, the rise of the new Negro in the South, the rebel who can write, as an army buddy of Fish's did, that "If somebody would prove to me that God's white, I don't think I could ever go to church no more. God just can't be like these goddamned white folks." Exit Amos and Andy and Booker T. Washington.

Wright is in the tradition of the Dreiser of *An American Tragedy* and the Steinbeck of *Grapes of Wrath*, a tradition that is too often patronized. The young and not-so-young literary gents who write professional criticism will have a field day at Wright's expense. Those whose critical arrow points South, who worship peripheral discourse, will laugh at Wright's head-on approach. The sophisticated Northern liberals, whose literary maturity stems from the moment they enrolled in Lionel Trilling's classes and whose political wisdom consists in not having voted for Henry Wallace, will damn *The Long Dream* as naïve, and, worst of all, as "innocent."

The novel does have a few rough

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moments: excessive dream sequences and several pompous speeches. But as we watch Fish develop, as we see him fighting a pal who is always "talking race," and as we watch him loving an almost white girl while he is finding his own courage, the imperfections are carried away by the power of the story, for the writing sins are of excess and not of cowardice.

The Jewish Hero: Two Views

by Paul Lauter

Gimpel the Fool and *Poems of a Jew* —the gulf between these two books externally about Jews resides already in their titles. Isaac Singer's is particular and human, Karl Shapiro's abstract and categorical.

Shapiro's Jew — and his poetry — is constructed mainly from fragments and tropes of gentile civilization:

> The name is immortal but only the name, for the rest
> Is a nose that can change in the weathers of time or persist
> Or die out in confusion or model itself on the best.

And this poetic definition of the Jew turns, like most of Shapiro's poems, upon images drawn from a particularly Christian mythos:

> Our name is impaled in the heart of the world on a hill
> Where we suffer to die by the hands of ourselves, and to kill.

"Jew" thus becomes for Shapiro, as for Sartre, a reflection of non-Jewish attitudes; the inescapability of being forever a Jew, which Shapiro notes in his introduction, arises simply because in a non-Jewish world the Jew is looked upon, whatever he may choose to become, as a Jew—an atheist Jew, a Catholic Jew, but always a Jew. Jewishness, definable only in relation to its environment, emerges as an "obsession" for Shapiro; never is it an historical and organic mode of human existence. Even the prideful celebration of Israel is permeated by the memory of the boy fleeing an orthodox patriarch soliciting funds, fleeing his beard and "the hieratic language of his heart" fleeing his own past to brood lyrically over fragments of present. Shapiro's Jew is not fully enough Jew to be Man. It is Karl Shapiro—lyrical and strident, impassioned and tender—who appears in every line; but no Leopold Bloom emerges from these pages.

Gimpel the Fool, by Isaac Singer (Noonday; $1.25). *Poems of a Jew,* by Karl Shapiro (Random House; $3.50).

For the Jewish Everyman originates only in a world whose grain and fibre are distinctively Jewish. It is for this reason that Isaac Singer—without pretentious introductory proclamation—succeeds, where Shapiro does not.

Besides being located in insular Jewish communities, Singer's stories invariably deal with matter and are communicated in prose arising directly from the experiences and traditions of such enclaves. At the very least he draws, like Hawthorne, upon folk superstition and lore for the imps and prodigies of his sophisticated morality tales. Abba Schuster, the little shoemaker, may at first appear ridiculous and simple-minded seeing himself in the image of Abraham, Isaac, or Jacob, consoling himself "by thinking that from him, Abba, to the Patriarchs, there stretched an unbroken chain of generations—as if he too were a part of the Bible." But blasted from his Polish home by the Nazi barbarians, his life becomes truly "like a story he had read in the Bible. . . . He had abandoned the house of his forefathers and the place of his birth and, staff in hand, gone wandering into the world like the Patriarch Abraham." Brought finally to America by his rich emigrated sons, the old man thinks, in the dim confusion of reunion, of Jacob arriving in Egypt:

> He felt he had lived through the same experience in a previous incarnation. His beard began to tremble; a hoarse sob rose from his chest. A forgotten passage from the Bible stuck in his gullet.
>
> Blindly he embraced one of his sons and sobbed out, "Is this you? Alive?"
>
> He had meant to say: "Now let me die, since I have seen thy face, because thou art yet alive."

The element of truth in Abba's attempt at what seems magniloquence, the reality of his ties to the Old Testament, make Singer's comparison more than a arbitrary literary allusion and keep the shoemaker, and his tale, from becoming either purely comic or sentimental.

Out of this setting grows Singer's masterpiece, *Gimpel the Fool.* Without elaborate folk or biblical background, Gimpel yet partakes fully of both elements. His story is a wonderful kind of folk tale drawn by Singer's artistry to the level of biblical parable. The butt of every jibe and deception, Gimpel rests his gullibility on a persevering assent to the world:

> All Frampol refreshed its spirits because of my trouble and grief. However, I resolved that I would always believe what I was told. What's the good of *not* believing? Today it's your wife you don't believe; tomorrow it's God Himself you won't take stock in.

So Gimpel persists, despite the town's trickery and his wife's incorrigible cheating until, temptation behind him, he launches into the world a kind of hobo Patriarch, an archetype of Beckett's bums, of Joyce's Bloom, of Bellow's Augie March, of all the outcast, deceived wanderers in our modern world—finally Shapiro's hoped-for Everyman, "man left over, after everything that can happen has happened." And his final vision of truth achieves the beautiful, always buoyant serenity of an anthem for these roamers finding a home:

> No doubt the world is entirely an imaginary world, but it is only once removed from the true world. At the door of the hovel where I lie, there stands the plank on which the dead are taken away. The gravedigger Jew has his spade ready. The grave waits and the worms are hungry; the shrouds

Critical Quackery

Why Critics are Guilty of It, And How to See Through It

by Theodore L. Shaw

Author of PRECIOUS RUBBISH

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are prepared—I carry them in my beggar's sack. Another *shnorrer* is waiting to inherit my bed of straw. When the time comes I will go joyfully. Whatever may be there it will be real, without complication, without ridicule, without deception. God be praised; there even Gimpel cannot be deceived.

Unions in Our Political Lives

by Tom Brooks

WITH intense discussion now going on about the unions' role in our political life, Marc Karson's study reminds us that organized labor has been in politics for a long time and that labor's basic style hasn't changed much since the formative first two decades of this century.

True, the social content of labor's legislative demands has changed—and in some instances, drastically. After all, it wasn't until 1932 that the AFL endorsed state unemployment insurance. Old age pensions, minimum wage, 8-hour day legislation were long opposed by AFL leadership as "socialistic." Nonetheless, organized labor in the United States has gone about its political action in pretty much the same pressure-group fashion since Samuel Gompers worked out the tactic of "reward your friends, punish your enemies."

American Labor Unions & Politics, 1900-18 by Marc Karson (Southern Illinois University Press; $6.50).

Mr. Karson, in scholarly—sometimes tedious—fashion once again shows how basically conservative the unions are in their political attitudes toward our society. Significantly, American students of labor, such as Selig Perlman, have come to view unions, though from a different direction, as Lenin did. "The working class," wrote Lenin in *What is to be done?*, "exclusively by its own efforts, is able to develop only trade union consciousness. . . . Pure and simple trade unionism means the ideological subordination of the workers to the bourgeoisie."

Karson attributes the domination of the conservative impulse in the American labor movement to the success of the Catholic anti-socialist campaigns during the crucial 1900-18 period. He documents this in the best chapter of the book. After giving due weight to other historical facts, Karson's conclusion is impeccable:

> The failure of socialism and a political labor party to evolve in America were in some measure due to the efforts made by the Catholic Church to prevent such a development.

But, I wonder, would it have been much different had the socialists somehow managed to win? Or, if Gompers had remained loyal to his early Marxist associations? I suspect not. Oh, no doubt, trade union jargon would be different—Reutherese might be more typical than it is. Mr. Karson, however, seems to think that had it not been for the Catholic victory, the socialist connection, as it is in Europe, might be stronger; a labor party might have developed. Karson sees the European, socialist-oriented unions as being more radical than our AFL-CIO. But as Adolf Sturmthal has shown in *Tragedy of European Labor*, we find in the European labor movement, "well hidden in the maze of political action but determining its content, the same pressure-group mentality that is characteristic of American labor."

So, if the old saw "the child is the father of the man" is as true of human institutions as it is of human beings, the weight of Mr. Karson's historical evidence and the results of this year's elections indicate that we can count on more of the same as American labor becomes more deeply involved in politics.

Darling, It Frightens Me!

by Boris Pasternak

DARLING, it frightens me! A poet
In love loves like a pagan god.
Chaos then creeps again to light
As when the world was first begot.

His eyes weep tons of mist. Shrouded
In clouds, a mammoth he seems in size.
"He's out of date; our times are new:
He's not in step, uncivilized!"

He sees how people wed, get soused,
Then sleep it off, and how the breed
Of poor frog-spawn by marriage rites
Becomes the best caviar indeed;

How life—this pearl by a Watteau—
They learn to squeeze into a snuff box.
They show their hate of him, because
They are apes and fitful weathercocks

Who cringe for comfort, lie, and live
As drones; because from common clay
He lifts a woman up in worth,
Like a bacchante from her amphora.

He melts the Andes with a kiss,
And fields at dawn, beneath the might
Of starry dust, while villagers
Stagger bleating in the night.

Today the reek of ancient gullies,
Each murky vegetative vestry-room,
Like mattress-beds of typhoid pain,
Spurts its chaos of jungle gloom.

Translated from the Russian by Eugene M. Kayden

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RECORDS

Hi- or Hi-er Fi

With only one exception readers have written me that they have no present intention of acquiring the additional equipment for stereophonic recordings, and have asked for a continuation of reviews of monaural recordings. A few are, nevertheless, interested in my opinion of stereophonic recording; and a very few occasional reviews of the records even though they don't plan to buy any.

I cannot give an opinion because I haven't myself acquired the additional equipment or been able to hear the assemblage of equipment I would want to hear, under suitable conditions, elsewhere. My reason for not acquiring it is my acceptance of what I consider dependable information and opinion on the subject—which is that the situation still isn't stabilized; that the defect of cross-talk hasn't been eliminated from the disc type of record that is now being issued; that for this and other reasons the sound from stereophonic discs isn't as good as the best sound from monaural discs; that improvements in the stereophonic discs are possible and are being made; but that the best sound will nevertheless be produced not by disc but by 7½-feet-per-minute tape.

I would therefore advise against acquiring all the additional equipment for stereo at present. But one piece of this equipment—the additional speaker—I would strongly urge everyone to acquire now, because of the improvement of the sound from *monaural* records when they are played through two speakers placed side by side. It is best for the speakers to be identical; and one must make sure they are in phase. Also, the better the speakers, the better the sound; and the finest sound I have heard is produced by the Janszen Z-200 systems that use the marvelous Janszen 130 electrostatic tweeter with the matching 250 dynamic woofer.

A few readers expressed apprehensions—which I think justified—that the exploitation of the stereo fad would cut down the recording of chamber music and music for solo voice or instrument, in which stereo is ineffective. This is a good reason for acquiring the fine monaural recordings of such music now in the catalog that may be withdrawn, and a few outstanding new ones. For example Overtone 17, with Chopin's Sonata Op. 65 for cello and piano—seldom heard and requiring repeated hearings for appreciation of its distinguished beauty, and superbly performed by Aldo Parisot with Leopold Mittman. The record also has Schubert's engaging *Arpeggione* Sonata and the effectively written Variations Concertantes of Mendelssohn.

Then Angel 45009, which continues the series of Boccherini quintets with the incandescent Op. 13 No. 3 and pleasant Op. 18 No. 1; and 45010, which offers the superbly inventive Op. 25 No. 3, the less interesting Op. 25 No. 1, and two fine single movements from Op. 29 No. 6 and Op. 42—all played well by the Quintetto Boccherini. And also Angel 45024, with two of the less frequently heard Haydn quartets, Op. 54 Nos. 1 and 2, which are two of Haydn's masterpieces in the genre and are played well by the Amadeus Quartet.

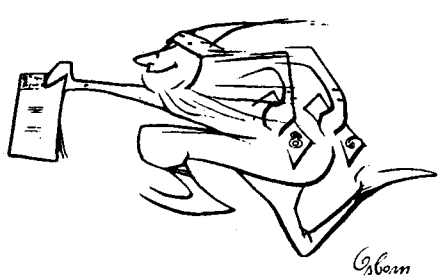
One of the infrequently heard lesser works of Schubert with very lovely pages, the Octet Op. 166, is played well by a Berlin Philharmonic group on Capitol-EMI G-7112; but I suggest instead the Vienna Octet performance on London LL-1049, which is more relaxed, more beautiful in tone, more sensitive in phrasing. The excitingly enlivened string-playing of the Vienna group is heard with lifeless piano-playing by Curzon in another such Schubert work, the *Trout* Quintet Op. 114, on London LL-3025; and I suggest instead the Amsterdam Quintet's performance on Epic LC-3046.

An infrequently heard but fine work of Beethoven, the Violin Sonata Op. 30 No. 1, and the popular *Kreutzer* Sonata Op. 47, with its beautiful variation movement, are given excellent performances by Arthur Grumiaux and Clara Haskil on Epic LC-3458. (The Grumiaux-Haskil performances of all ten sonatas are now assembled in SC-6030). And Columbia ML-5291 has the exciting performances that Eugene Istomin, Joseph Fuchs and Pablo Casals recorded at the 1953 Prades Festival of Beethoven's Trio Op. 1 No. 1, whose scherzo and finale are engaging early Beethoven, and Op. 70 No. 1, whose first movement is impressive middle Beethoven.

Stereophonic recording would heighten the antiphonal effect of the processional and ceremonial music of Giovanni Gabrieli on Vanguard BG-581 that was originally performed at St. Mark's in Venice; but the beautiful pieces for large double chorus supported by instrumental groups are effective enough as they come off the monaural record excellently performed by the chorus and orchestra of the 1957 Gabrieli Festival in Venice under Edmond Appia's direction.

But stereophonic recording would add nothing to Fischer-Dieskau's performances with Gerald Moore—extraordinary in their expressive use of his fine voice—of the Schubert songs on Angel 35624. The familiar ones include the great *Im Abendroth,* the exquisite *Geheimes* and *Nachtviolen,* the charming *Liebesbotschaft* and *Abschied*; the unfamiliar ones the impressive *Totengraeber's Heimweh* and the engaging *Der Einsame.*

B. H. Haggin



This Christmas give The New Republic

Notes on Contributors

BARBARA HOWES is primarily a poet. Her newest book is *In the Cold Country.* RICHMOND LATTIMORE has published one volume of his own poetry and a number of books of translations. CHARLES SHAPIRO is on the faculty of Wayne State University. PAUL LAUTER teaches English at Dartmouth. TOM BROOKS is labor editor of *Business Week.*

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MOVIES

A Masterpiece

What you don't understand is that it is possible to be an atheist, it is possible not to know whether God exists, or why, and yet believe . . . that history as we know it now began with Christ, and that Christ's gospel is its foundation. . . . The two basic ideals of modern man (are in the Gospels)—without them he is unthinkable—the idea of free personality and the idea of life as sacrifice.

THIS QUOTATION from *Doctor Zhivago* can serve as epigraph for the new film entitled *He Who Must Die*. It was made in Crete, principally with French actors, and was directed by an American, Jules Dassin; the screenplay is by Dassin and Ben Barzman (rendered into French by André Obey and provided with good sub-titles) and is derived from *The Greek Passion*, a novel by the eminent Nikos Kazantzakis. The most reserved opinion I can offer on this film is that it is an important artistic event of our time.

He Who Must Die (Kassler Films).

The commonest tag in movie ads is "unforgettable." To use it of this film is appropriate enough but negative; this picture is not merely unforgotten, it lives. For it deals strongly, beautifully, tremendously movingly, with the deepest things conceivable to men.

The story is difficult to synopsize although it is massively simple to watch. The time is 1921, when Greece was under harsh Turkish rule. We see first, even before the titles, a Greek village desolated by the Turks. The survivors set out to find a place to rebuild; at their head marches their priest, Fotis. The scene shifts to another village, distant and untouched, where a Turkish Agha and his garrison are stationed and where the inhabitants have learned how to live comfortably under domination. This village receives permission from the Agha to proceed with its ancient Passion Play, which it produces every seven years; and no sooner are the leading parts assigned than Fotis and his people arrive, weary from months on the road, seeking help.

The local priest, Grigoris, backed by the two local rich men, refuses the newcomers on two grounds: first, they must be trouble-makers or the Turks would not have punished them; second, even though Fotis makes clear that they want only untilled land, Grigoris says the countryside cannot support more people. Fotis leads his exhausted flock away but only to the slope of a nearby mountain. There, on the rocky hillside, unable to move further and in clear view of the comfortable ones below, they dig in.

That might be the end of it; the newcomers might have starved or frozen to death up there. The trouble is that five of the villagers below who have been chosen for the Passion Play are affected by the parts that have been assigned them—the Jesus, Peter, John, James, and Magdalen. With human beings starving on the mountain above, who also happen to be fellow-Greeks, these five cannot rest. Against the angry commands of Grigoris, who fears that the newcomers will create disorder and evoke Turkish wrath, these five help Fotis and his band.

The progress to tragedy is powerful and ineluctable. I won't detail it here, but eventually Grigoris and his friends go to the Agha and demand the life of the chief trouble-maker, their fellow-townsman, the Jesus. It is granted them, and the film closes with Fotis and his people, and their new friends, inspirited by this death, determined to withstand the Turks, who are, in turn, determined to crush them. The issue at the end of the picture is, as it is in life, as yet undecided.

I have devoted this space to the story for two reasons. First, I hoped to convey the idea that it is built of large architectural blocks. It is not a drama of personalities but of moral forces set in motion and in fierce opposition. Second, I hoped to show that the symbolism of the story is absolutely obvious (the Agha as Pilate, occupied Greece as Judea, Grigoris as Chief Rabbi, and so on): so obvious, so unpretentious and unclever that there is about it no trace of patness whatsoever. It is unadorned, vital, and right. The film says simply, "This is the Passion again, and always. The elements fall into place because they have never moved out of place. The struggle is old and it is endless because some men are capable of love, and the others hate them because of the lovelessness in themselves that is thus revealed."

For me, the quality of this film is so high as virtually to silence criticism. I have now seen it twice, and although I've noted a few flaws, it would be ridiculously disproportionate to anatomize them. Jean Servais as Fotis, Maurice Ronet as the rich man's son chosen for John, Gert Froebe as his father, Melina Mercouri as the village widow cast as the Magdalen, Gregoire Aslan as the Agha, Pierre Vaneck as the shepherd chosen for Jesus, are the principal members of a cast who move so perfectly in consonance with the film, who understand so well what they are close to, that what is created here is not only the Greek arena of the story—in hard, sun-beaten austerity—but also the world in which we all move and try to hope.

Servais glows with the irony and aggressive love of the realist-priest who has accepted the facts of manhood. Ronet radiates the sweetness of a gentle, sheltered youth realizing fully for the first time that there are unloved men and women outside his snug world. Froebe is winning as the worldly man who is proud of his worldliness partly because he is stuck with it. Miss Mercouri, one of the few native Greeks with speaking parts, has gone past the conventional character of the cynical town prostitute who sees behind the facade of *bourgeois* hypocrisy; she is a woman who knows what sin is and knows she is not damned. Aslan, sensual, patient, cruel, balances nicely the surety of Allah's Faithful with the disinterested amusement of the pagan. And Vaneck, as the stammering, illiterate shepherd, fumbling his way out of his simple life into complexities and then on to greater simplicities, has a fineness that sounds like a lovely, sustained chord.

YET the chief artistic glory of this film, the source of all else, is its direction; it establishes Jules Dassin as one of the premier film artists of our age. His achievement here is not the immense grandeur of an Eisenstein, the intimacy and color of a Renoir, the stunning ingenuity of a Welles. In this film Dassin reaches something different, rare, and wonderfully affecting: purity.

That is the essence of this picture. From the initial sight of the burning cross beyond which we see the ravaged

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village, we sense an operant mind that has a pure image of what it wants to attain and sets about it with dramatic clarity. The end is perceived from the first, and we travel towards it unswervingly. (Hence the fitness of the title.) With sure, clean scythe-strokes, the script and camera move through the tangle of possibilities to open the inevitable path through which we follow.

Dassin and his colleagues have achieved the quality of the best art; the film doesn't tell us, it reminds us. In that best art, when we read or look or listen, beneath the revelation there is a small voice that keeps saying "Of course". "Of course" this is the way the scene in the church should look and sound when they assign the roles in the Passion Play; "of course" this is the way the people of the two villages should confront each other, this is the way the widow should behave when the shepherd comes to see her; "of course" this is the right death scene for the rich man, visited first (with rose and raki) by the Agha, then re-united with his rebellious, loving son. None of it is surprising; it is all much too good.

This film will mean many things to many people: perhaps an allegory of contemporary philosophies or political ideologies, perhaps of the sanctity of revolt. But two themes, I think, predominate. The first is also the theme of Shaw's *Saint Joan*: the one thing that no organized religion can tolerate is the communicant who takes its teachings absolutely without demur and lives up to them completely. He begins by badly straining the capacities of the organization, then usually outgrows any need for it and treats directly with divinity. Religions are designed for average men, not saints, and any church must, understandably, think first of preserving itself as a safeguard for the great majority rather than allow its authority to be weakened by one member's independence of it.

The second theme, even larger, is the question of why men bother to do good. Why, when there is an easy way, do some men choose a terrible one? Why do some men help other men at risk of loss or pain or death? In the present early state of civilization, the question, for some, is, at its deepest source, unanswered. We still await the fully satisfactory explanation, either supernatural or rational, of man's interest in ethics and morality. About all we know now, as Pasternak says, is that the modern world begins with Christ's principles, which are equally moving to religionist, agnostic, and atheist. For all three, the best beauty in life is the one that is impassionately dramatized in this film: the affirmation of humanity by love.

He Who Must Die opens in New York at the Fifth Avenue Playhouse in early December. If your local "art" theater has not scheduled it as yet, I take the liberty of suggesting that you urge the manager to arrange it. It is a curious thing to think that an experience of exaltation can be shipped in six or seven cans from New York.

STANLEY KAUFFMANN

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Correspondence

(Continued from page 3)

assignment of the blame for TV's failure "on big business, and on big television" is another matter.

For one happy moment let us suppose the existence of a completely quixotic Chairman of the Board who one day says to his subordinates, "Gentlemen, to hell with the stockholders and the bylaws. We're going to adopt Edward R. Murrow's proposal. Every so often we're going to yank our entertainment show and let the network fill the hour with programs that will enlighten and uplift us all, make us better citizens, happier and nobler human beings. And hear this, you guys—no commercials. NO COMMERCIALS!"

What, oh what do you suppose happened then?

Well, at exactly ten o'clock the morning after the first telecast, the overnight Trendex just having come in, each Vice-President in Charge of Sales Promotion of each of the two rival networks (both of which had, of course, programmed their regular entertainment shows) ordered a full page ad boasting of last night's victory over our quixotic friend's network in the Battle of the Ratings.

A day or so later, the sponsors of the shows which followed his program threatened the network with cancellations if the egghead program was not discontinued forthwith. The great masses of viewers it had driven to the other two networks had stayed there for the rest of the evening thereby ruining their own ratings.

Shortly thereafter, customer reactions being in, the Board Chairman's sales department began sharpening the axe for the head of our friend. Meanwhile, since the program seemed to contain all that he had hoped it would, paeans of praise were arising from the trade press and those television reviewers who take their work seriously.

And what were Mr. and Mrs. John Q. Televiewer and family doing all this time? When the enriching and uplifting program came along, particularly the second one, they promptly turned the dial and tuned in the entertainment show of one of the competing networks. It was as simple as that.

When Mr. Murrow used the word *palatable* he described with frightening precision what we as a nation insist on having above everything else. Only things that taste good. Real good. By their advertising shall ye know them. If you want to know us, take a look at what we pitch to ourselves. Day and night, by car card, billboard, newspaper, magazine, radio, television, direct mail, we urge ourselves to buy more things which will make life easier, make our females more inviting, our males more desirable. Comfort and sex, these are our twin gods. We don't want controversy.

JOHN RUST

Claremont, Calif.

► *Hydriotaphia Regained*

SIRS:

IT is difficult not to be in awe of the wide range of Gerald Johnson's erudition. Only in his November 10 column has it been possible to find a misattribution on his part. Not Bacon, but Sir Thomas Browne, in a famous passage in Chapter V of "Hydriotaphia, or Urnburial" says:

> What song the sirens sang, or what name Achilles assumed when he hid himself among women, though puzzling questions, are not beyond all conjecture. . . .

P. L. FORSTALL

Evanston, Illinois

► *Republican Grammar*

SIRS:

ONE of the heartening things about the recent election was the proof that it takes more than bad Republican grammar to beat the Democrats. For some inexplicably childish reason, certain Republicans insisted on proving their illiteracy by always speaking of the "Democrat" party. This, by equally childish reasoning, was somehow supposed to destroy their opponents—probably by first making them "mad." I have yet to meet any Democrat who felt anything but amusement at this show of Republican ignorance of Mr. Webster's handy reference book where "Democrat" is *only* a noun and "Democratic" *only* an adjective.

MARIAN B. CLAUSEN

Northfield, Minn.

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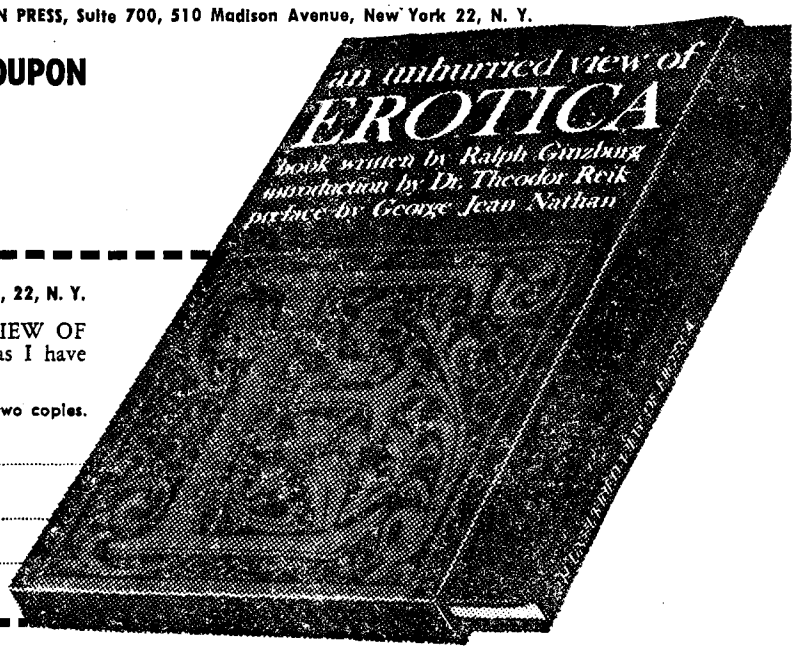
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